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ABSTRACT

A professor of interpersonal communication at the University of Hawaii, Windward Community College included aspects of storytelling and family history in his approach to a self-concept unit. The task for the students was to create a 3- to 5-minute story based on elements found in their social or family culture. The goals of the project are to: provide a means by which students can have meaningful conversations with family members through the use of interview; investigate the art of storytelling to create images that express a sense of their social or family culture; present their stories to the class; and analyze their findings in relationship to their self-concept. The project was then divided into six steps: (1) create an interview schedule; (2) conduct the interview; (3) complete a "Summary of Interview"; (4) discuss in class what storytelling or personal narrative is; (5) present the 3- to 5-minute stories in class; and (6) submit an assessment, "Storytelling Final Evaluation." Illustrations of some of the project's stories/interviews show how students responded to the project. A total of 33 students from two classes responded to the "Storytelling Final Evaluation" positively. 88% of the students discovered information that had not been previously known to them. Conclusions about the project include: the process which is followed using this methodology gives students a specific structure to follow in gathering information; the depth of family information gathered using the methodology is enhanced; with more information students have a clearer idea of family influences on self-concept; and storytelling provides students the opportunity to share what they have learned. (NKA)

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Storytelling in the Interpersonal Classroom: Bridging "Self" with Family History

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Storytelling in the Interpersonal Classroom: Bridging "Self" with Family History

Overview and Objective

Some of my favorite memories of growing up during the '50s were associated with sitting around the dining room table in my great-grandfather's home and hearing the stories about how he came to this country, his adventures, how he built his home and started his business. Similarly, other family members were immortalized in those wonderful stories. These "tellings" were important because they offered the family a sense of where they came from and who they were. These stories ultimately influenced how we perceived ourselves.

When discussing self-concept in the interpersonal communication classes, the family is considered significant because of values that are learned, roles that are followed, and beliefs that people have in their own ability. It is surprising, though, that many students know little about their families and are unable to recognize elements that might influence their behavior. Time and again, students are asked to talk about their families or other acquaintances that have most influenced their lives. Many respondents know little about their own parents, let alone aunts, uncles, grandparents, and others. It is difficult for them to discern who may have affected their self-concept.

Current practices in teaching self-concept recognize the significance of family influence (Weaver, *Understanding Interpersonal Communication*, DeVito, *The Interpersonal Communication Book* DeVito, *Messages*). My research extends current practice by exploring family cultures to help students analyze their own self-concept.

Progression of Research

My methodology has progressed in a variety of research areas. These include searches of literature and texts, current application both nationwide and locally, and observation of storytelling and interviewing classes at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Through observation of SP 280, Interviewing, an instructional strategy for use of informational interviewing was developed. Major and probing questions were also examined as an essential for students in gathering information, along with developing an interview schedule and knowing how to begin and end the interview. References included *The Dynamics of Interviewing* by Fobert L. Kahn and Charles F. Cannell, and *Interviewing: Principles and Practices* by Charles J. Stewart and William B. Cash.

One of the applications of this research was to take the information gathered during the interview and present it as storytelling. By observing selected UH-M classes, SP 333 Storytelling, valuable information was gained on the storytelling process, especially that of folktale and creating a sense of person and place. Attending two different productions of the Literature in Performance Series, sponsored by the UH-M Speech Department, showed a variety of sources and styles of presentation that could be used by students. Especially impressive was a young Tongan woman who related stories of her childhood mixed with Tongan folklore. Texts used in preparation were *Handbook for Storytellers* by Caroline Feller Bauer, *Storytelling: Art and Technique* by Augusta Baker and Ellin Greene, *Storytelling: Process and Practice* by Norma Livo and Sandra Rietz, and *Once Upon a Time* by Lucille and Bren Breneman.

In November, I attended the National Communication Association Conference in Chicago, sharing ideas with colleagues and in seminars. I then put into practice what I expected of my interpersonal students. I interviewed family and recorded their memories of my great-grandfather and daily life in his household. First of all, a series of questions and probes (schedule) was

created. This also allowed for additional information given by the interviewee (EE) that may not be covered by the interview schedule, but at the same time contain the interview within a defined perimeter. The tapes were then reviewed and from the information gathered a tale was developed to be presented as storytelling. From these interviews and stories, I examined influences on my self-concept and identified characteristics that were shared with my great-grandfather and his children.

Instructional Application

In Fall 1998, unit plans in my interpersonal communication courses were written to include this new approach as part of the self concept unit. The **task** for the students was to create a three to five-minute story based on elements found in their social or family culture. The **goals** of the project are: (1) to provide a means by which students can have meaningful conversations with family members through the use of interview, (2) to investigate the art of storytelling to create vivid images that express a sense of their social or family culture, (3) to present their stories to the class and (4) to analyze their findings in relationship to their self-concept.

After discussing the overall Interpersonal Communication Storytelling Project (see attached handout), suggestions were made for storytelling topics: where family came from, how (grand) parents met their spouses, what they did in the "old days," recognition or honors that family members received, special memories or how other influenced them. These were offered as suggestions, not required topics. Students were encouraged to explore situations that they felt were relevant to them. The suggestions were merely that, a way to start thinking about the project. Also, because of the unique nature of students and their relationships to their families, they were not required to interview or create stories about family members. EE's could include friends, teachers, acquaintances, anyone who may have influenced their self-concept.

The project was then divided into six steps. **Step one** was to create an interview schedule. Class discussion covered different types of interviews: directive, nondirective, and combination. Relationship dimension, including being aware of verbal and non-verbal feedback and listening skills, was included. The advantages of a moderately scheduled interview that included open and closed questions were discussed. Distinctions were also made between primary and secondary questions. Note-taking and tape recording were encouraged during the interview as well as using probes to encourage the EE to be more responsive. To create the schedule, students met in dyads and helped each other in writing questions that would be appropriate to the person they were interviewing and the specific information they were seeking. These schedules were then shared and critiqued with the class.

Step two was the conducting of the interview. One-hour appointments with the EE were made in advance, even with family members. Aside of taking notes and recording the interview, students were urged to review those notes within an hour of completing the interview.

Step three required the completion of handout #1, *Summary of Interview*. This included three areas. First, the name, address, phone number and relationship of the EE to the student were submitted. Then, a summary of the information gathered, not a transcript, was completed. Finally, the interview schedule, which included both primary and secondary questions, was attached to the handout. Following are two sample schedules:

Project Study #1, Laura S.

Interviewee— John B., cousin, Wilmette, IL.

Primary-1 When you were a young boy, did you realize your mom was a celebrity?

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Secondary-1 Did she take time out to be just "yours"? Baking? Singing or reading to you?

P-2 What do you suppose drove her to be a success?
S-2 We all have a voice within us. What do you think that nagging voice within Fanny Lazzar was saying?

P-3 Do you think she would have ever wanted to live her life differently? Perhaps choosing a different path?
S-3 When she was no longer in the limelight, do you think she felt alone, hurt, depressed?

Summary of Interview: Johnny B., Fanny Lazzar's boy, never had a normal mom. She never did the things other moms did. At least that's what some people thought. When they finally locked the door at 1606 Simpson Avenue in Evanston, Illinois, the home of Fanny's World Famous Restaurant, everything changed. Then Johnny B. would have a mom, if only for two minutes. She would go into his room smelling of her own signature perfume and restaurant food. Kiss him goodnight and sit at the edge of his bed, praying maybe. Fanny Lazzar was an overnight sensation. At least that's what some people thought, but Johnny B. knew how hard she worked. He saw her working in the kitchen each afternoon when he returned home from school. She would be testing and tasting new recipes, meeting with vendors, choosing the freshest and finest meats, herbs and cheeses there were available. She expected nothing less than the best. If it had her name on it that's the way it had to be. According to Fanny, she wouldn't have changed a single thing about her life. All the hard work and tears were hidden within Fanny. She never let on just how badly she hurt.

Project Study #2, Jason M.

Interviewee— Kim R., mother, Kaneohe, HI.

P-1 What did you do in the olden days?
S-1 How old were you in the olden days?
S-1 What year was that?

P-2 What kind of crowd did you hang around?
S-2 Where did you go to school?
S-2 What did you do after school?
S-2 Were you a pot-smoking hippie like everyone else?

P-3 Did you work?
S-3 If so, where did you work?

P-4 How old were you when you had your first boyfriend?

P-5 What do you really mean when you say the "good ol' days?"

Summary of Interview: Because her life is so good now, she would rather be interviewed in forty years. I didn't think that would help my communications grade now, so we picked a good time of her life when she was a senior in high school. It was back in 1973 and she had really worked very hard in order to graduate early, so she could be over with school. Unfortunately, her mom didn't let her. With a sad face, there were no ifs, ands, or buts about the decision. Some sort of revenge was taken. My mom didn't drop out like I probably would have, but she revenged smart. She continued to go to school, but only took a few elective classes. This, being as smart as she was, left her a little too much free time on her hands.

She was a normal high school girl. She liked to cruise at night, hang out with the athletes and cheerleaders. She had a part-time job as a waitress in a restaurant called Fiddlers Three, where she met my dad whom was the cook. That's another story.

Boredom set in at school, so her friends and she cut school a lot. They usually drove to the beach but one day they took the sixty mile cruise on their bikes. She liked to go to Zuma Beach in Southern California to watch the guys surf.

When it came nightfall, the hoodlum in her came out. She and a bunch of friends decided to take the eight foot Bob's Big Boy mascot, drag it up the hill which was so conveniently located behind the school and face him toward the school so he was waiving when the school day started. Yep, they got suspended for three days, but no arrests.

Step four began with an in-class discussion of what is storytelling or personal narrative. Discussion covered who tells a story, and how to create a story including the student's unique personality, folklore, and ethnic background. Especially in Hawaii with our non-majority population, students were encouraged to incorporate their language and dialect into the telling. Audio tapes from the campus library of local storytellers were used to demonstrate how to construct a story with a beginning, climax, and conclusion. Building characters in terms of description and dialogue (giving the characters a voice) was also discussed. It was emphasized that all memories are based on perception, so there isn't necessarily one right way to tell a story. If that recollection is enhanced, that is acceptable as long as the intent of the characters or situation is respected. Handout #2, *Summary of Storytelling*, included a brief statement about what would be the content of the storytelling. More importantly, though, students were asked to reflect on how the information from the interview had changed as it became a story. What information was deleted? What was expanded? How was that story brought to life?

Project Study #1, Laura S.

Describe the change from interview to story: My interview focussed more on the private Fanny, the Fanny only her immediate family would ever know. My story, however tells a tale of a very public persón, a person whose personal push and drive would win her the admiration of many. This Fanny is the Fanny she wanted people to see. She would have preferred I reveal her public side, and leave the private side private.

Project Study #2, Jason M.

Describe the change from interview to story: During the interview I just asked questions about her school days in the good ol' days, not so much about what she does now. I'm going to tell the class that its OK to party and still end up successful like my mom. It changes in that I'm gathering what seems to be useless information about my mom and rearranging it so it's more of a lesson to be learned.

Learning the story was another important aspect of this discussion. Telling the story to themselves, to others, out loud in front of a mirror, anywhere and everywhere was a great way to know the words. The advantages and disadvantages of memorizing were discussed with emphasis being placed on memorizing key phrases within the story, the beginning and the ending, and also important passages. Students did need to prepare in order to discover what was the best way for them to learn the story. Students were also reminded of other delivery issues such as rate, pitch, volume, and eye contact.

Step five was the presentation of their three to five-minute stories in class. On that day, the desks were arranged in a circle. This was to emphasize the sense of group and a non-formal speaking situation. Some students actually brought objects to class such as photos or other memorabilia that related to their stories. Others had brief notes to help them remember what they were going to say. At this point, the most important idea was to have the students feel relaxed and comfortable while sharing their stories. The stories were also recorded to preserve the oral histories and to share the results of this project.

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Project Study #1, Laura S.

The Storytelling: Aunt Fanny's Restaurant

I am going to tell you a story tonight about my Aunt Fanny. First of all , she started out on her quest for fame and fortune in the mid 1940s just after World War II, which was a time when most women were planning their families, baking cookies and modeling their lives after June Cleaver. Not Fanny, she wanted something more. She wanted to be remembered. What I remember most about Fanny is the perfume she wore. She used to blend her own perfumes from pressed flowers and exotic oils. She wore it every day. Another thing that really stands out in my mind about her is, as beautiful as she was, she used to wear these really heavy gold earrings that hung on her ears and the lobes, which were consequently weighted down by them.

My story begins when Fanny decided she wanted to open a tiny restaurant in Evanston, Illinois in 1947, I think the month of September. She found a little place on the wrong side of the tracks, but that didn't stop her. She was on a quest. She set six little tables with red and white table cloths, always fresh cut flowers and put a sign out that said "Fanny's Society and Celebrity Center— Open for Business." Now, mind you, she opened this place on the wrong side of the tracks. She began getting some regular customers. They were all blue collar workers, truck drivers, milkmen and policemen who wanted to hang out all day and just kinda mooch. That didn't bother her. She was grateful. It wasn't exactly society and celebrity, but she was still happy for their business. She was tired: she was the cook, the prep in the kitchen, the cashier, the bus boy. She was doing everything all alone. She never got an ounce of encouragement from friends or family members, which was really a drag.

One evening when she went to bed she prayed as she always did. She prayed to God for guidance and direction. She said "Oh God, please send me a sign." That night she had a dream and in that dream, an angel appeared, and the angle said he was sent from God and that she should never give up and always follow her dreams. Sooner or later things would work out for her.

So the next morning she got up bright and early as usual and went down to the kitchen and started chopping vegetables and garlic and started sauteing. She was distracted by a man standing in the doorway. He was a stocky, black man trying to get her attention by clearing his throat. "Uh hum ," and when their eyes met he said "Miss Fanny, I'm your new chef and I was sent by the Lord to help you out."

Just about the time that happened, Fanny had placed a small ad in the local newspaper in Evanston, which is a suburb of Chicago. Oddly enough, a man who was visiting Chicago from New York was an editor of the New Yorker Magazine and had spotted this small ad. He was so taken by it that he republished it in the New Yorker Magazine, which is now, and was back then, a very well respected publication. A few days after that, she noticed that her usual blue collar lunch bunch had a new face. This face happened to be Marshall Field III, who was in Chicago a very well respected businessman, entrepreneur, and was the celebrity that she was looking for to start coming to her restaurant.

He had seen this ad in the New Yorker, which was wonderful. He couldn't wait to meet this woman who wrote so beautifully and wanted to get to know her better. He began to bring his friends into the restaurant, and soon her restaurant was growing and the popularity was growing. She expanded the restaurant and Fanny's truly was becoming a society and celebrity center. She put incredible art work on the walls and every available space in her restaurant was lined with books that she had collected over time. She was really just an interesting person. Over time, she entertained presidents and their wives, kings from foreign lands and movie stars alike. It was just amazing. Her legacy lasted forty years.

Her limelight began to fade, and so did her health and she checked herself into a rest home. Her stage there became very small and she became very despondent. Fanny ended up throwing herself out of a fifth story window and died. But she will always be remembered. I'll especially remember how she used to smell and her big hoop earrings.

Project Study #2, Jason M.

The Storytelling: Mother's "Not So Good" Side

My mother's always been like really good, like a goody, goody. I thought maybe she's never been into trouble before, never partied, never done anything, never smoked a cigarette, straight A's all through her life, real professional.

So I thought. Well, does she ever have fun? Sure enough, she did. In her high school years, ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade, she really jammed in the books and tried to graduate early. But come time for her senior year her mom wouldn't let her graduate early. She doesn't know why today, but I guess she just wanted her to associate with people in her own age group. So she took senior art, senior drawing, painting, B.S. classes like that. She didn't have home work and she had a lot of free time, which made her kind of rebellious against her mom so all she did was like cut school and go out at night. She admitted she actually drank some beers. I was shocked. But usually when they cut school they would go down to Zuma Beach in California, so the guys could go surf and the girls could do whatever on the beach and stuff. And then they used to go to restaurants not really to eat anything, but just cause trouble. There's this thing that they do on Van Nuys Blvd. They get their souped up cars, like Mustangs. They used to drive them all down and show off in front of everyone. My mom didn't know anyone with a nice car, so she had this friend that had a beat up old pick up truck. They had this Dairy Queen and their mascot was a cow, but it was on wheels so what they did was they went and stole the cow, tied it to the bumper. My mom got on and she rode down Van Nuys like she was in a parade and stuff like that. A cop pulled them over for illegally riding on a plastic cow. She didn't really get busted out. She had to return it and write an apology note to the restaurant.

Her other prank, she and her friends did (I think we have one in Hawaii). It's called Bob's Big Boy, and their mascot is like a big guy with a whopper or whatever on top. Somehow they took it, put it on the same truck, and her school, Allegheny High, was like Kalaheo High, with a mountain on top. Every morning they had to go out and pledge allegiance to the flag. So they took this Bob's Big Boy, hauled it up to the top of the hill, and pointed it down towards the flag. So when everyone the next morning went to do the flag thing, they all saw Bob waving. She got suspended for that. I guess she got even with her mom, but I think that was the end of her bad days.

The final part was **step six**, submitting an assessment, handout #3 *Storytelling Final Evaluation*, between the person in the story and the students own self-concept. Responses covered five areas and offered an opportunity to specifically identify influences on their self-concept. Students also provided explanations with each response.

Assessment of Effectiveness

A total of 33 students from the two classes responded to the *Storytelling Final Evaluation*. Following are the questions and responses, including some sample explanations, from those forms:

1. Did you discover information that was previously unknown to you?
yes— 29
no— 4

88% of the students discovered information that had not been previously known to them. In fact, students gained significant knowledge and insight into the lives of those who influenced them. Some of the comments in this section included:

•I knew (my grandfather) was in WW II, but I didn't know anything else. This was a good project because I found out what he did, where he went, and how he felt during this time.

•What was unknown to me was (my friend) was adopted and she was put in an orphanage home. ...She had a brother who committed suicide two years ago.
•I learned that my very strict grandfather was married before he married my Kupuna. He is also the first Mr. Mom which was hard to believe because growing up I never really saw the gentle side of him.
•It helped me to realize a bit more his perceptions of a woman's role in society and how that perception might effect our relationship.

2. Has this interview affected your relationship with the interviewee of others in any manner?
yes— 12
no— 21

Although a smaller but still significant percentage, 36% of the students felt that this interview affected their relationship with the interviewee or the subject of the interview in a positive manner. This is important because it shows that it is possible to open or improve communication. Of the 64% that answered "no" to this question, an overwhelming majority indicated that the relationship was already a positive one with good communication. Comments in this section included:

•It was nice for my sister and I to recall the situation that happened fourteen years ago, I think it reinforced our family bond. We felt connected by the story and were reminded of the fact that life is a precious gift, we shouldn't take it for granted.
•It brought me closer to my mother. Through her telling me about her past we were able to communicate better.
•When you open up to someone and disclose details about yourself, it brings an increased amount of intimacy to the relationship. The comfort level has increased. Communication is more open because you feel the person trusts you and that goes both ways.
•No and yes. This interview has not affect us in anyway. But the fact of his mom's death and how it has altered his way of dealing with women, has affected our relationship for as long as I remember. He is very sensitive and scared of me leaving him, or something bad happening to me.
•No. I never knew my dad or his mother and I still don't know them. My mom blabs a lot and I get irritated with her when she was telling me the stories.
•I think that my aunt and I are much closer because they've been distant from my family for so long. It was after the time my uncle died. But, after we talked, we just kept on talking and she was able to give me her honest thought at my questions. She is a beautiful spirit.
•Interestingly, my father and I have drifted apart in the past several years. We seem to have less to talk about in which we see eye to eye on. After I interviewed him, he called the next day and asked to take my twin boys on a hike with him. Perhaps, this may be a start to build a bridge to more communication between us.

3. Were you able to identify similarities or differences between the person that was the topic of the interview and yourself?
yes—31
no— 2

94% were able to distinguish similarities or differences between themselves and the person that was the topic of their interview. This is important in establishing how this person influenced their lives and affect self concept. Some of the student comments were as follows:

•Now that I am a bit older, I see more similarities than in the past. I see now more than ever that I am a product of her efforts. In the past I saw her as being very old fashioned, stern and a bit anal. Now I think I'm going to be just like her. Thanks Mom.
•My grandfather was as fun-loving and sincere as I am. We both like to live life to its fullest. He was a very loving man. He taught me the importance of family and I want to pass that down to my own.
•Although I am not spiritually nor athletically inclined like my grandfather, I know that he and I both sacrifice a lot for family. I also realized that he and I are very driven to achieve something better and our family is the driving force.

•I see many similarities between my aunt and myself, primarily how complex I feel she was and I am currently. I, too, have a side of my personality that is very private as she did. Sensory stimulation affects me greatly as I know it did her. She chose to surround herself with finery. Her clothing, her choices all reflected her style and good taste. She had a genuine need to succeed. It was in her. It possessed her. Ultimately it overcame her. I am driven. I push myself constantly. I am rarely satisfied with myself. But I would never let my drive consume me to the point of suicide.

4. **Has this person influenced your self-concept?**
yes—31
no— 2

94% felt that this person has influence their self concept. This was a very positive response since one of my initial concerns was for students to realize how family/acquaintances affected self concept. Some of the responses from this section follow:

•My sister has always been very strong willed and often speaks her mind. I think she has taught me to be more aggressive and to stand up for myself.
•My friend has opened up my mind and helped me know the world differently. Each individual has a right to act and behave the way they want unless it intervenes with someone's right to do the same. Tolerance is essential when you live in a world of a multitude of beliefs. Experience brings you knowledge and it is ignorance that keeps you down. Acceptance is the first step to boost your self concept. If you can't love yourself, how are you going to love somebody else?
•As a result of my mom giving me insight, the people I choose to spend my time with have also helped make me into who I am. I have respect for myself as a friend, a woman, and a human being because of my mom. And this alone affects my self-concept— or actually, it is my self-concept.
•First and foremost, I was always told that I was his favorite grandchild. Now, whether that's true or not, it doesn't change what effect that comment still has on me today. That little statement of favoritism fills me up with a pride like no other. For this man to have loved me that much, even after countless other grandchildren coming into the family, touches me so deeply.

5. **Was there a response to the storytelling from your family or friends?**
yes—28
no— 5

Finally, 85% responded that family or friends responded to the storytelling. One of the most important aspects of storytelling is that they are shared with others. If stories are to be passed between generations, they must begin with being told. Comments from this section follow:

•My mother loved it. She likes when I tell people about her Christmas and how she organized activities and the food she loves to cook.
•My niece and daughter were surprised and wanted to know more about my mom as she was raised in a different environment.
•When I interviewed my mom, my whole family slowly migrated to the living room to take part. To me, this was the best part because we all sat there together and laughed and inquired about their relationship and how things happened between them. I think that this is what you meant by telling us the importance of storytelling because this was the best quality time we'd had in a while.
•My fiance wanted to know more about my family, which I was happy to share with him. It is a topic we don't speak enough of and this project allowed us to share more about our families with each other.
•It was an emotional experience, but more importantly I was no saint, and was frowned upon from my mother and her brother. After telling my story to them, that stereotype seemed to leave their thoughts because they both responded emotionally and became very responsive about my talk and my feelings. I guess they realized that they weren't the only ones experiencing the loss.
•I had a very good response from my family members on my storytelling. My father said it was really good and he also gave me some advice on how to improve it. My sister really liked the story because she didn't know the life that our great-great grandparents lived.

•I told my children the cute stories of my father. They were very inquisitive; asking me more and more questions— some of which I could not answer. It made me more aware of the importance of passing down information about our ancestors before the information is lost.

Additional follow-up questionnaires will be distributed in six months to determine if the stories were retold, if there was a long term effect on family relationships and how the project affected the students lives.

Conclusion

Conclusions based on my application of this process indicate:

- The depth of family information gathered using this methodology is enhanced.
- This process gives students a specific structure to follow in gathering information.
- With more information, students have a clearer idea of family influences on self-concept.
- Storytelling provides students the opportunity to share what they have learned.
  - >Reflecting and assimilating is part of the learning process.
  - >Students become a catalyst for open dialogue with others.

Facing the new millennium, it is important to understand who we are as individuals, how our families have influenced us and to bring those stories into the new century. Especially in Hawaii, where there is a great variety of backgrounds and cultures, it is important to preserve and perpetuate these stories that say so much about ourselves.

Interpersonal Communication **Com 145**
Storytelling Project **A. Ragains**

Task: To create a 3 to 5-minute story based on elements found in your social or family culture.

Goals: The goals of the project are (1) to provide a means by which you can have meaningful conversations with family members through the use of interview, (2) to investigate the art of storytelling to create vivid images that express a sense of your social or family's culture, (3) to present your stories to the class, and (4) to analyze your findings in relationship to your self-concept.

Suggestions: Stories about...
where they came from.
how they met their spouses.
what they used to do in the "old days."
recognition or honors they received.
outstanding or special memories.
how they influenced you.
what they taught you.

Project Steps:
1. Create an interview schedule.
2. Conduct your interview, taking note and recording.
3. Submit summary of the interview.
4. Take facts from interview and create a "story."
5. Present "story" to class.
6. Submit comparison between characteristics of person in "story" and your own self - concept.

Evaluation:
1. **Content**— The storytelling should reflect a part of your culture: a story you might share with your children or with a loved one. Your story should be filled with **detail**. Take the time to involve all five senses of the listeners, if applicable. Keep your stories rich in detail. Don't just "brush over" when you can create "in depth."

2. **Organization**— Your story should be shared in a clear, understandable manner. Whether it is one story or many, organization should be strong. Don't jump back and forth, confusing the listeners.

3. **Preparation**— The story should reflect thorough work, on your part: that you have taken time to develop your ideas and put them into a significant communication that will meet the time limit.

4. **Delivery**— Speak loud enough so that the group can hear you. Try to watch your tempo, speaking slowly so the class can understand. Watch the people that you are talking with, not the floor or the ceiling.

5. **Notes**— You may create a brief outline or notes to use during presentation of your story, but it is **not required**. You may talk without any notes at all. If you do write out something, don't be stuck to it. Maintain a conversational style with the audience.

7. **Practice**— Your story should reflect practice. This will help you to smooth out your delivery so it is not choppy. This will also help you find the right words to express your ideas. Preparation and practice are the two things you can do to best reduce anxiety (stage fright).

Interpersonal Communication
Storytelling Project Timeline

Com 145
A. Ragains

Class	Date mw	tt	Activity
6	9/14	10	Introduction to project
7	16	15	How to interview Create schedule
8	21	17	
9	23	22	What is storytelling? **Submit** Project Interview
10.	28	24	
11	30	29	**Submit** storytelling summary
12	10/5	1	**Storytelling presentations**
13	7	3	
14	12	8	**Submit** Final Evaluation

Handout #1

Interpersonal Communication **Com 145**
Storytelling Project Interview **A. Ragains**

Name_____

1. Interviewee: Who is the person you will be interviewing? Obvious choices would include family members such as parents, grandparents, aunts or uncles. You could also interview personal or family friends, or any other person that may have significantly influenced your life.

Name	**Address/Phone**	**Relationship**

2. Summary: What information was gathered during the interview? This is not a word-for-word retelling, just summarize the basic information that was gathered. Do not forget to attach you interview schedule to this handout.

Handout #2

Interpersonal Communication **Com 145**
Storytelling Summary **A. Ragains**

Name_____

1. **Write a summary** describing what you are going to share with the class. This is not word-for-word what you will say, but rather a brief retelling of the plot and other significant details.

2. **Describe** how your story has altered or changed from the initial information that you gathered in the interview.

Handout #3

Interpersonal Communication **Com 145**
Storytelling Final Evaluation **A. Ragains**

Name_____

Please respond to the following questions in paragraph form. For additional space, please use the back of this paper or extra sheets.

1. Did you discover information that was previously unknown to you? Explain.

2. Has this interview affected your relationship with the interviewee or others in any manner? Please describe.

3. Were you able to identify similarities or differences between the person that was the topic of the interview and yourself? Please explain.

4. Has this person influenced your self-concept? How?

5. Was there a response to the storytelling (personal narrative) from your family or friends? Explain.